



BACKGROUND PAPER

NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR DAY

In March 2007, by a Proclamation of Congress, National Medal of Honor Day was established as an annual observance to commemorate the historic Act signed by President Lincoln and to remind the American public about the Medal's history and ideals. The first Medals of Honor were presented on March 25, 1863.

The Congressional Medal of Honor Society, chartered by the Congress in 1958, consists exclusively of the living Medal of Honor recipients. Today, fewer than 90 recipients remain alive.

This upcoming year, 2011, marks the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the Medal of Honor, which President Abraham Lincoln signed into law in 1861. Since that enactment, the Medal, which has been awarded fewer than 3,500 times, has been our nation's highest award for military valor. Its monumental anniversary represents 150 years of courage and sacrifice on the part of the millions of men and women who have defended our freedoms in uniform. For more information, visit www.cmohs.org.

CITIZEN SERVICE BEFORE SELF HONORS

On October 9, 2007, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., in honor of the President who established the Medal of Honor, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and Co-chair General Colin L. Powell (USA-Retired) announced *Above & Beyond* as a non-partisan "Service Before Self" initiative and called upon the American public to nominate fellow citizens.

That event was the first time the living Medal of Honor recipients, who have been on the receiving end of countless accolades and respect from the American public, had banded together to create a national platform to promote "Service Before Self." At the heart of the initiative was the *Citizen Service Before Self Honors*, which would recognize and honor ordinary Americans who became extraordinary by going above and beyond on behalf of their fellow man either through a single act of heroism involving risk to one's life or by demonstrating a profound long-term commitment to selfless service.

Nominations for the *Citizen Service Before Self Honors* are submitted online at www.CitizenServiceBeforeSelfHonors.org. Finalists will be selected by a board, including Medal of Honor recipient representation. From the finalists, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society will select three extraordinary individuals to receive the *Citizen Service Before Self Honors*. Finalists receive a framed certificate, recognizing their selfless act(s), heroism or prolonged service.



CITIZEN SERVICE BEFORE SELF HONORS

PROCESS, CRITERIA & TIMELINE

TIMELINE

- **Open nominations:** Monday, November 9, 2010
- **Close nominations:** Friday, February 18, 2011
- **Finalists announcement:** Monday, March 7, 2011
- **Recipients announcement:** Monday, March 21, 2011
- **Recipients honored:** Friday, March 25, 2011

CRITERIA

Who Can Nominate: Any American who is aware of a fellow citizen, neighbor, co-worker, or ordinary American, a hero among us, who without the expectation of fame or reward, has placed others before self in some extraordinary way.

Who Can Be Nominated: Any United States civilian who through a singular act of extraordinary heroism or through a prolonged series of acts, clearly demonstrated a willingness to place his or her own life at risk for others. In all cases the actions being honored must epitomize the concept of “service before self” and must be performed “above and beyond” one’s professional or vocational area of responsibility or conduct.

Please note: nominees who are deceased are fully eligible. A singular act of heroism must have occurred within the last three years. A series of acts of long-term selfless service must have been ongoing within the last three years.

How to Enter: Click on “Nomination Form,” <http://citizenservicebeforeselfhonors.org/2010-honors-nominations/nominations-form>, fill it out, then click “Submit.”

Deadline: Nominations must be received by Friday, February 18, 2011.

SELECTION PROCESS

A panel, to include Medal of Honor recipient representation, will consider all nominations and select national finalists. From among those finalists, a second panel of Medal of Honor recipients will select three individuals to receive Citizen Service Before Self Honors at a ceremony on Friday, March 25, 2011 to be held at Arlington Cemetery near the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington, VA.